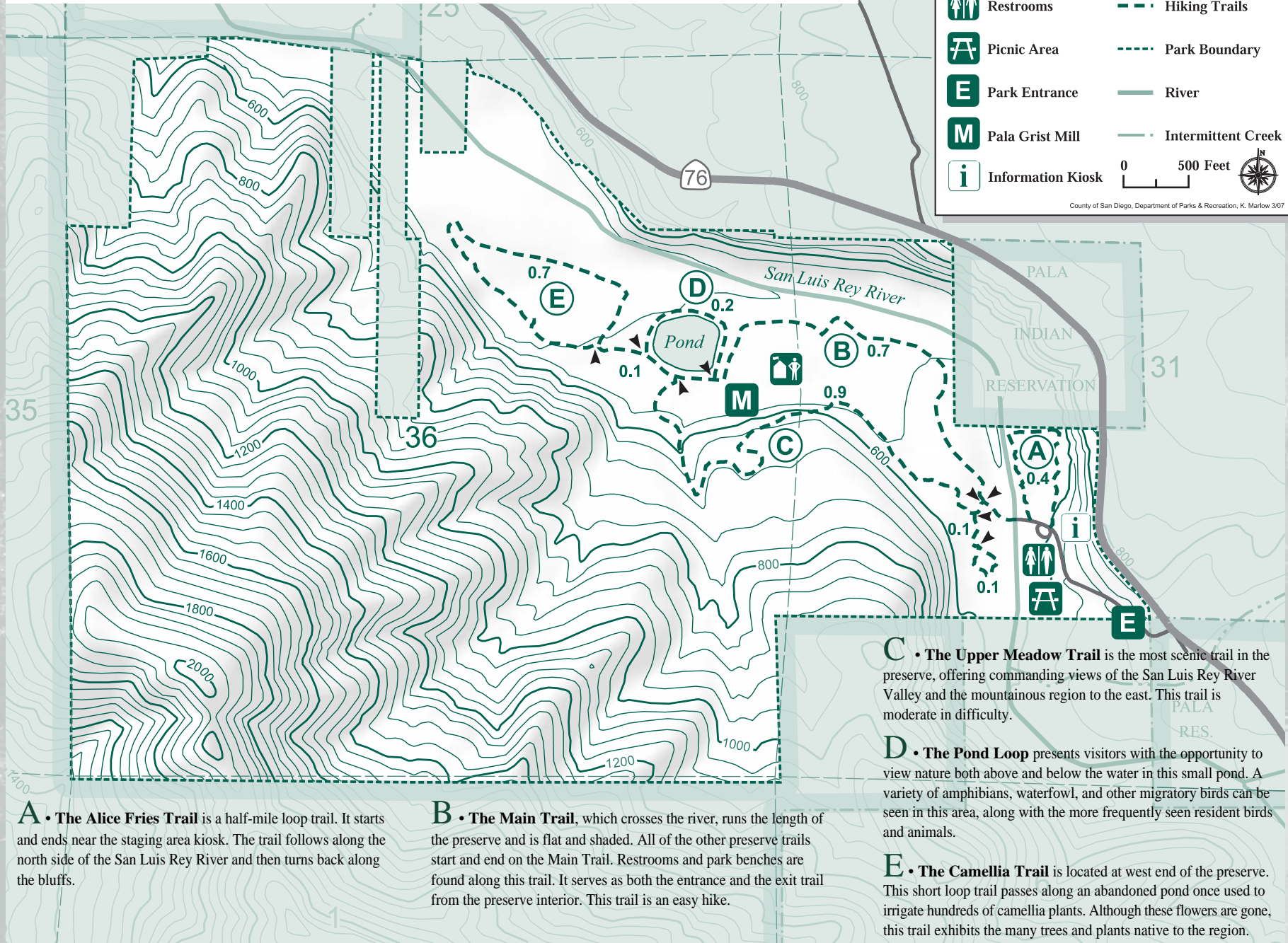


Hiking Trails

There are over six miles of hiking trails in the preserve, and all are considered easy to moderate. All trailheads are identified by name, and trails are clearly marked with intermittent signposts.



RULES & REGULATIONS

ACCIDENTS:	The County of San Diego shall not be responsible for loss or accidents.
UNAUTHORIZED MOTOR VEHICLES:	The unauthorized operation of motor vehicles is prohibited.
LITTERING:	Is prohibited.
DEFACEMENT PROHIBITED:	No person shall remove, deface, or destroy trail markers, monuments, fences, trees, camp or picnic structures, or other preserve facilities.
PRESERVATION OF TRAIL FEATURES:	All wildlife, plant, and geologic features are protected and are not to be damaged or removed. All historical artifacts are to be left in place.
PETS:	Domestic pets are excluded from open-space preserves. Dogs accompanying the unsighted or deaf are excepted.
NO HUNTING:	No person shall use, transport, carry, fire, or discharge any firearms, air guns, archery device, slingshot, fireworks, or explosive device of any kind in a preserve.
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:	No intoxicating liquors having more than 20% alcohol by volume are permitted.
FIRE HAZARDS AND SMOKING:	No smoking. Campfires are prohibited. Stoves allowed only in primitive group camping area.

Preserve hours:  
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Thursday – Monday

RESERVATIONS & INFORMATION



Toll Free • (877) 565-3600  
Local • (858) 565-3600

For online reservation information,  
visit us at [www.sdparks.org](http://www.sdparks.org)

WILDERNESS GARDENS

A San Diego County  
Open Space Preserve



Visit us online at [www.sdparks.org](http://www.sdparks.org)



# Welcome to Wilderness Gardens

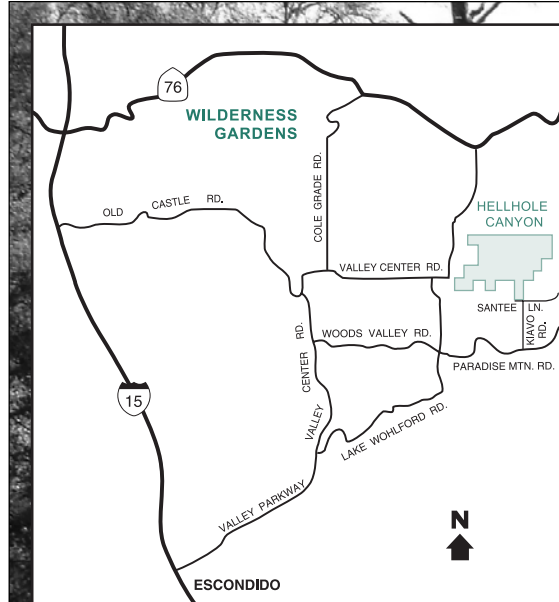
Located in northern San Diego County astride the San Luis Rey River is a hidden gem waiting to amaze visitors. Wilderness Gardens Open Space Preserve beautifully reflects the rich cultural and natural diversity of the region.

In 1973 Wilderness Gardens became the first open space preserve in San Diego County Parks. Today a combination of natural vegetation types, including oak woodland, riparian, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub, provide habitat for a variety of indigenous wildlife. Many bird species, including migratory birds, resident waterfowl, and birds of prey are abundant. Coyotes, raccoons, bobcats, snakes, and deer are also commonly seen in the preserve.



Park amenities include a parking lot, small picnic area, several easy to moderate hiking trails, and a pond. Restrooms are available at the parking area and along the Main Trail.

The bountiful natural attractions of Wilderness Gardens are obvious, but the careful observer will also see evidence of countless generations of human habitation. For thousands of years, the Luiseño Indians inhabited this area and gathered acorns from oaks growing along the San Luis Rey River. Evidence of this is reflected in the grinding rocks located along the river. The Luiseño were hunter-gatherers who moved from the mountains to the coast as the seasons dictated.



In the 19th century, the area started to see new inhabitants. One of the most notable reminders of this period is the rock foundation from the 1881 Pala grist mill. Established by the Sickler Brothers, this was the first grist mill in northern San Diego County. Farmers and their families from all over the region brought their crops to be ground into flour. Because grinding wheat and corn into flour was a slow process, families spent several weeks camping out, meeting with seldom seen neighbors, and having great fun at the mill.

The property changed hands several times, becoming a ranch in the early 1900s. In the 1950s Manchester Boddy, noted editor, publisher, and owner of the *Los Angeles Daily News*, bought the property. As an avid horticulturalist, Boddy cultivated camellias, azaleas, lilacs, and other shrubs that he grew for sale. It was Mr. Boddy who coined the name “Wilderness Gardens.”

Today friendly rangers offer interpretive programs and tours of the mill site by reservation.

## Hiking Tips

Visitors should bring their own drinking water. There is no potable water in the preserve. Hikers should wear sturdy shoes. A hat and suitable clothing are also recommended. Hike with a companion. Please remember that Wilderness Gardens Preserve is an open space preserve. Mammals, reptiles, bees, and poison oak are natural parts of this environment. For your safety and the preservation of resources, visitors must remain on the designated trails at all times. Park Rangers are regularly in the ranger station or patrolling in the preserve.